

# Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement A

A pronoun usually refers to a noun or another pronoun called its *antecedent*.

**8q.** A pronoun should agree in number and gender with its antecedent.

**EXAMPLES** Alicia left **her** book bag on the school bus.

Many people like the **movie** because of **its** special effects.

The **musicians** are practicing for **their** spring concert.

Not every **student** has returned **his or her** permission slip for the field trip.

**EXERCISE** On the line provided in each of the following sentences, write a pronoun that agrees with the antecedent. Then, circle each antecedent.

**Example 1.** (Paul) loaned Nell his jacket.

1. Mary Ellen took \_\_\_\_\_ dog for a walk after dinner.
2. One of the men bent to pick up \_\_\_\_\_ tools.
3. Somebody left \_\_\_\_\_ books on the lawn last night.
4. Sean said that \_\_\_\_\_ was too tired to come with us to the movies.
5. Out of sheer boredom, the cat chased \_\_\_\_\_ own tail.
6. Stanley went up to \_\_\_\_\_ room to do the homework assignment.
7. Miranda hung the diploma on the wall of \_\_\_\_\_ bedroom.
8. Each of the girls on the soccer team received \_\_\_\_\_ own jersey yesterday.
9. As the sun set, the mountain cast \_\_\_\_\_ shadow across the desert.
10. Pick up the frying pan and bring \_\_\_\_\_ to me, please.
11. We stayed awake to watch the film until \_\_\_\_\_ was over.
12. If your sister gets here after I leave, tell \_\_\_\_\_ I left a casserole in the fridge.
13. Neither of the boys remembered where \_\_\_\_\_ baseball glove was.
14. That afternoon Uncle Oliver told us stories about \_\_\_\_\_ experiences in Vietnam.
15. Either of the men is willing to tell you what \_\_\_\_\_ saw at the accident scene.
16. Emily Dickinson often gave \_\_\_\_\_ poems away as gifts to neighbors.
17. Everybody at the office put flowers in \_\_\_\_\_ cubicle.
18. The author of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* changed \_\_\_\_\_ name from Samuel Clemens to Mark Twain.
19. Each of the nuns lifted \_\_\_\_\_ hand to make the sign of the cross.
20. Someone hung \_\_\_\_\_ wet towel over the shower curtain.

## Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement B

**8r.** Use a singular pronoun to refer to two or more singular antecedents joined by *or* or *nor*.

**EXAMPLE** Neither **Ramona nor Gloria** could find **her** library card.

**8s.** Use a plural pronoun to refer to two or more antecedents joined by *and*.

**EXAMPLE** **Vincent and Jules** have learned all of **their** lines in the play.

**EXERCISE A** On the line provided in each of the following sentences, write a pronoun that agrees with the antecedent or antecedents. Then, circle each antecedent.

**Example 1.** Every Sunday Maggie and Roger watched their favorite television show.

1. When we're playing tennis, my brother and I never let the other players intimidate \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Either Jason or Raul will bring \_\_\_\_\_ tool kit to the bicycle race.
3. Brenda and Caitlin told us that \_\_\_\_\_ didn't plan to come to the party.
4. If either Brittany or Celine wants to be a successful writer, \_\_\_\_\_ will need to work hard.
5. Leora and Annette pooled \_\_\_\_\_ resources to buy a birthday present for Jim.
6. Please ask Glendon and Maria if \_\_\_\_\_ science fair project is ready yet.
7. Did Lauryn or Marian say if \_\_\_\_\_ was going to the mock trial?
8. Karen and I discussed \_\_\_\_\_ difference of opinion quite calmly.
9. Frank and Tina would like the class to help \_\_\_\_\_ set up their display.
10. Let Kathryn and Michael know in advance if \_\_\_\_\_ should bring a dish to the party.

**EXERCISE B** Each of the following sentences contains an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement. Cross out the error, and write the correct pronoun above it. Then, circle each antecedent.

**Example 1.** Either Denzel or Malcolm will bring <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ soccer ball to the game.

11. Julio and Spike have brought all of his CDs to the dance.
12. Neither Faith nor Deanna knew where their bicycle was.
13. Is Melissa or Martina sure they won't join us?
14. Let's ask Antonia and Belle if she read the article about comets.
15. Does Dutch or Pike have their notebook with him?

# Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement C

**8t.** Some indefinite pronouns are plural, some are singular, and some may be either.

(1) Use a singular pronoun to refer to *anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, nothing, no one, one, somebody, someone, and something*.

**EXAMPLES** **Each** of the boys likes **his** new uniform.  
Has **everybody** in the club paid **his or her** dues?

(2) The following indefinite pronouns are plural: *both, few, many, and several*.

**EXAMPLE** **Few** of the explorers became lost on **their** way out of the cave.

(3) The indefinite pronouns *all, any, more, most, none, and some* may be singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

**EXAMPLES** **Most** of the forest has already been cut down, hasn't **it**? [*Most* refers to the singular noun *forest*.]  
**Most** of the trees have already been cut down, haven't **they**? [*Most* refers to the plural noun *trees*.]

**EXERCISE** Each of the following sentences contains an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement. Draw a line through each incorrect pronoun, and write the correct form above it. Then, circle the antecedent.

**Example 1.** Each of the cats has <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ own special hiding place.

- Some of the CDs have lost its jewel cases.
- Few of the women's soccer team enjoyed her stay in Helsinki.
- Either of the brothers is willing to bring their baseball glove to the game.
- Hasn't anybody announced their intentions yet?
- Many of the reporters do his or her own research.
- All of the rosebushes in the garden have thorns on it.
- Everyone in the class is aware of their responsibility to bring a note from home.
- Someone on the swimming team left their goggles by the side of the pool.
- Several of the boys joined the military after he graduated from high school.
- Some of the people in the audience got the joke, and it laughed heartily.

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# Pronoun-A

**8t.** Some indefinite

e may be either.

(1) Use a singular pronoun: *everything, neither, nobody, nothing, no one, one,*

*it, either, everybody, everyone, and something.*

**EXAMPLES** Has **anyone** lost **his or her** keys?

**Each** of the recipes calls for wheat as **its** main ingredient.

(2) The following indefinite pronouns are plural: *both, few, many, and several.*

**EXAMPLE** **Several** of the teachers ordered **their** textbooks early.

(3) The indefinite pronouns *all, any, more, most, none, and some* may be singular or plural, depending on their meaning in a sentence.

**EXAMPLES** **All** of the money retained **its** value. [*All* refers to the singular noun *money*.]

**All** of the vases retained **their** value. [*All* refers to the plural noun *vases*.]

**EXERCISE** On the line provided in each of the following sentences, write a pronoun that agrees with its antecedent. Then, circle the antecedent.

**Example 1.** (Several) of the houses lost their roofs during the storm.

1. Each of my sisters has \_\_\_\_\_ own pogo stick.
2. None of the employees should reveal \_\_\_\_\_ password to anyone.
3. Everything the teacher said made sense the moment he said \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Both of the astronomical calendars have the same nebula on \_\_\_\_\_ covers.
5. Several of the police officers spent \_\_\_\_\_ holidays volunteering at the new community center.
6. If you have anything to say during the debate, please say \_\_\_\_\_ as succinctly as possible.
7. Neither of my grandmothers has ever revealed \_\_\_\_\_ secret for making jambalaya.
8. More of the palm trees have been planted this year because \_\_\_\_\_ look so striking along the beach.
9. One of the male interns put \_\_\_\_\_ clipboard down to pick up the baby.
10. Most of the radio program was written by Marta, but a few minutes of \_\_\_\_\_ were written by Tish.

## Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement E

- 8u.** Either a singular or a plural pronoun may be used to refer to a collective noun, depending on the meaning of the sentence.

A collective noun is singular when it refers to the group as a unit and plural when it refers to the individual parts or members of the group.

**SINGULAR** The **band** made **its** debut in November 1999.

**PLURAL** The **band** happily signed autographs for **their** fans.

**EXERCISE A** In each of the following sentences, circle the antecedent for the pronouns in parentheses. Then, underline the pronoun that agrees with the antecedent.

**Example 1.** After hearing all the evidence, the jury made its decision quickly.

1. The thundering herd left a wide swath of flattened grass in its wake.
2. As the team entered the lobby, the fans began to ask for its autographs.
3. After debating all of its options, the commission issued its report.
4. The readership of the newspaper were not shy about making its opinions known.
5. The jury could not agree among itself what to order for lunch.
6. During the intermission, the ensemble tuned its instruments.
7. The majority of the class took its work home last night.
8. The Fantasy Society voted *The Lord of the Rings* its choice for Book of the Century.
9. The cast of the play took its curtain calls one at a time.
10. The crowd voted with its feet and left the debate early.

**EXERCISE B** On the line provided in each of the following sentences, write a pronoun that agrees with its antecedent. Then, circle the antecedent.

**Example 1.** The class agreed to hold its annual party next month.

11. The troupe of actors looked good in \_\_\_\_\_ costumes.
12. The entire staff lined up in the parking lot to have \_\_\_\_\_ picture taken.
13. The committee cannot even agree among \_\_\_\_\_.
14. After a fierce battle, the platoon took \_\_\_\_\_ position at the top of the ridge.
15. After winning, the team posed for photographs with \_\_\_\_\_ ecstatic fans.

# Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement F

- 8v.** An expression of an amount may take a singular or plural pronoun, depending on how the expression is used.

**SINGULAR** I paid **twenty dollars** for these skates. I thought **it** was a reasonable price.

**PLURAL** I have **twenty dollars**, but one of **them** has been torn in half.

- 8w.** Some nouns that are plural in form take singular pronouns.

**SINGULAR** I have good **news**. Would you like to hear **it**?

**PLURAL** Where are the **scissors**? Oh, here **they** are.

**EXERCISE A** In each of the following sentences, circle the antecedent for the pronouns in parentheses. Then, underline the pronoun in parentheses that agrees with the antecedent.

**Example 1.** Jerrold enjoyed studying genetics because (it, they) combined biology and chemistry.

1. If I make fifty dollars from the carwash this weekend, I can use (it, them) to put a down payment on a bicycle.
2. After Luther oiled the shears, (it, they) were ready to use again.
3. Michiko poured the molasses and watched (it, them) cover the bottom of the pan.
4. Now that you've heard the news, do you think (it, they) will affect how you vote?
5. If you want to go to the Olympics, you have to train for (it, them).
6. Sue had three dollars in her wallet, but now one of (it, them) is missing.
7. Vera dropped the pliers in the grass and then spent an hour looking for (it, them).
8. Mathematics was more than an interest for Leora; (it, they) became a passion.
9. Roxanne decided not to wear her shorts because (it, they) had become threadbare.
10. He had only seventy-five cents; would (it, they) be enough to pay for the juice?

**EXERCISE B** Each of the following sentences contains an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement. Cross out each incorrectly used pronoun, and write the correct pronoun above it. Then, circle the antecedent.

**Example 1.** Please put the scissors back when you are finished with <sup>them</sup>~~it~~.

11. Francesca decided to take civics because she could fit them into her schedule.
12. Malik has lost his eyeglasses; he needs it for basketball.
13. Take the binoculars out of its case, please.
14. Did you hear the news? Could they be any worse?
15. Of all the pants you could have worn, that could be the worst.

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# Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement G

- 8x.** Use a singular pronoun to refer to the title of a creative work (such as a book, song, movie, or painting).

**EXAMPLE** Have you read "**The Bells**" by E. A. Poe? **It** is one of my favorite poems to read aloud.

- 8y.** Use a singular pronoun to refer to the name of a country, city, or organization.

**EXAMPLE** **Calloway Motors** will have **its** grand opening on Saturday.

**EXERCISE** Most of the following sentences contain an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement. Draw a line through each incorrectly used pronoun, and write the correct pronoun above it. If a sentence is already correct, write C next to the sentence number.

**Example 1.** Hartwig Interiors is redesigning <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ own showroom.

- Discount Appliances used to be located on Burnet Avenue; they stood where a beautiful orchard used to grow.
- The Cowboys* is one of my dad's favorite movies, and he has seen it several times.
- After Tranh was assigned to read *Great Expectations*, the Charles Dickens masterpiece, he managed to finish them over the weekend.
- The Netherlands is also known as Holland, and its citizens are known as the Dutch.
- The Sons of the Desert, devoted to the comic films of Laurel and Hardy, was founded in 1964, and my grandfather has been a member of them since 1967.
- After I read "Flowers for Algernon," I found out that Hollywood has adapted them for the movies twice.
- As you read T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men," consider the effect of them on your imagination.
- Jacques Offenbach never completed his opera *The Tales of Hoffmann*; Ernest Guiraud finished them after Offenbach's death.
- When you come to the Narrows, where so many ships have gone down, go around them.
- Several of my uncles are members of the Knights of Columbus; my father has also been a member of it.

## Review A: Subject-Verb Agreement

**EXERCISE A** Circle the subject in each of the following sentences. If the underlined verb does not agree with the subject, cross out the verb and write the correct verb above it. If the sentence is already correct, write C before the sentence number.

**Example 1.** The sailors on the ship <sup>have</sup>~~has~~ all been granted shore leave.

1. My shoes and my shirt lies at the end of the bed.
2. Either Dr. Chen or Dr. Montoya plan to perform the operation.
3. Don't someone who has read the books have something to say?
4. One by one, the flock of birds have descended into the trees.
5. Afternoons are the best time for a nap.
6. The officers of the Forest Service doesn't approve of campfires during a drought.
7. Gymnastics or electronics is the only class with spaces available.
8. There are many students who use study hall to finish their homework.
9. Most of the horses grazes in the upper pasture during the summertime.
10. Both of the flute players hopes to audition for the first chair in the orchestra.

**EXERCISE B** Circle the subject in each of the following sentences. Then, underline the form of the verb or contraction in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

**Example 1.** Everyone in the senior class (is, are) looking forward to the field trip.

11. Neither Jay nor Sonya (is, are) going to the folk festival this year.
12. Each of the children (~~has~~, have) gone to bed by now.
13. Anyone who listens to the singer's music (~~has~~, have) to get up and dance.
14. Our cat Conrad and our dog Padgett (like, likes) to sleep on the bed.
15. Katherine told me that the League of Women Voters (is, are) sponsoring a debate between the two candidates this Wednesday.
16. All of my aunts and uncles (remember, remembers) when my grandmother's birthday is.
17. (Doesn't, Don't) most people in our town recycle their bottles and cans?
18. Either of the girls (is, are) happy to help you rake your lawn.
19. When (is, are) the football team scheduled to play Reed City?
20. Enrique told me that he (~~don't~~, doesn't) care for okra.



## Review B: Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

**EXERCISE A** Circle the antecedent for the underlined pronoun in each of the following sentences. If the underlined pronoun does not agree with the antecedent, cross out the pronoun and write the correct pronoun over it.

**Example 1.** (All) of the young men have left <sup>their</sup>~~his~~ childhoods behind.

1. Many of the science fair contestants have brought his or her own equipment.
2. One of the girls has gotten mud all over their shoes.
3. Every member of the class brought their own pencil to the test on Friday.
4. Either Sergio or Michael will need to bring their boombox to the party.
5. No one in the family remembered to bring their key to the cabin by the lake.
6. Aren't all of your uncles taking a fishing pole with him on vacation?
7. A few of the students told his or her parents about the pop quiz on Friday.
8. Each of the kittens cried for their mother.
9. One of the young women was certain that the award for Best Class Song was going to them.
10. Some of the books showed Princess Diana on its covers.

**EXERCISE B** In each of the following sentences, circle the antecedent for the pronouns in parentheses. Then, underline the pronoun in parentheses that agrees with the antecedent.

**Example 1.** (Each) of the children handed the teacher (his or her, *their*) answer sheet.

11. *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* is my mother's favorite film; she has seen (*it*, *them*) several times.
12. The cast of the play decided to have a party after (*its*, *their*) last performance.
13. One of the ships was able to unload most of (*its*, *their*) cargo before the hurricane struck.
14. The Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies will publish Professor Becker's book as part of (*its*, *their*) publication series.
15. Having mastered electronics, Judith is very good at explaining (*it*, *them*) to the class.
16. Have you ever wondered why birds resting on a branch or a telephone wire tuck (*its*, *their*) heads under their wings during a storm?
17. The council didn't get to (*its*, *their*) final vote until nine o'clock that night.
18. Someone from the boys' basketball team left (*his*, *their*) shoes on the bench.
19. Those young women will carry (*her*, *their*) own luggage onto the plane.
20. Neither of the girls can tell me where (*her*, *their*) sleeping bag is.

## Review C: Agreement

**EXERCISE A** Most of the following sentences contain an error in subject-verb agreement. Cross out the incorrect form of the verb, and write the correct verb form above it. If a sentence is already correct, write C next to the sentence number.

**Example 1.** Grand Rapids, Michigan, <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ a center of furniture manufacturing.

1. The sound of all these birds echo all around the courtyard.
2. Economics seem like a difficult subject to some people.
3. Fifteen feet of rope were necessary to secure the boat to the dock.
4. Moving with one mind, the crowd surge toward the stage.
5. Don't he know which way he's going?
6. Where is the books that I left on the kitchen counter?
7. Either Kadonna or her brother is responsible for sending out the invitations for the reunion.
8. Everybody who contributed to the charities are welcome at the annual dinner.
9. About ten percent of the furniture are sitting in a warehouse.
10. Monday afternoons are the best time to make an appointment with Dr. Secada.

**EXERCISE B** Most of the following sentences contain an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement. Cross out the incorrect pronoun, and write the correct pronoun form above it. If a sentence is already correct, write C next to the sentence number.

**Example 1.** The Netherlands is in Europe; adjacent to <sup>it</sup> ~~them~~ are Belgium and Germany.

11. Mikki has saved fifty dollars; she plans to use them to buy a present.
12. As soon as we heard the news from France, we passed them along to our friends at home.
13. After seeing the film *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, Declan recommended them to his brother.
14. Candace or Melanie will bring their soccer ball to the championship match.
15. The gymnastics team discussed their fears about going to the meet.
16. No one who has ever seen Angkor Wat will ever forget their first impression of it.
17. We heard that some of the boys' ski team are bringing his own skis.
18. Carl or David will bring his football to the game.
19. After you're done with the binoculars, please put it back in the case.
20. The jury debated the verdict among itself.

## Review D: Agreement

**EXERCISE** Each of the following sentences contains an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement or subject-verb agreement. Draw a line through each incorrect verb or pronoun, and write the correct verb form or pronoun form above it.

**Examples** 1. Neither Los Angeles nor San Francisco <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ the capital of California.

2. Either Dad or Uncle Tom will pick us up in <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ car.

1. Nicoletta or Jacqueline will present their book report to the class tomorrow.
2. Everybody in our classes were informed in advance about the change in schedule.
3. Some of the best paintings are next-door; let's look at it first.
4. Here is the books you ordered online, Ms. Shimeda.
5. Each of the teachers spoke to their own class.
6. Some of the groceries has already been placed in the pantry.
7. Either the players or the coach call timeout.
8. A theater and a rehearsal room was added to the high school last year.
9. Everyone who completed their project on time was rewarded with a bright, shiny apple.
10. Nobody in the caravan were paying attention when the camel went astray.
11. The Cho family will take their vacation this year in Thailand.
12. When the shears were broken, Eric found time to repair it.
13. Doesn't the dog and cat get along?
14. Macaroni and cheese are my favorite dish.
15. If you spill all of the cereal, make sure to clean them up.
16. Neither Uncle Lyle nor Uncle Tector remembered where their boots were.
17. The presence of thousands of peacekeeping troops assure the villagers of their safety.
18. When presented with a legal summons, a citizen has an obligation to respond to them.
19. We will listen to half of *Nights in the Garden of Spain* this morning, and we will hear the rest of them this afternoon.
20. Neither the students nor the players is likely to forget the homecoming game.